

REMARKS

This Amendment and Request for Reconsideration is submitted in response to an outstanding Office Action dated December 1, 2003, the shortened statutory period for response set to expire on March 1, 2004. This response is submitted on that due date and accordingly, no Petition or Fee for Extension of time are believed necessary. However, in the event that the Commissioner determines that an extension of time is necessary, the undersigned hereby petitions for the required extension of time, and authorizes the Commissioner to charge any required fee to the Milbank Deposit account 13-3250.

I. Status of the Claims

Please amend add new claims 27-34 as indicated above. Claims 1-34 are now pending in the application. Claims 1, 11, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 are independent claims.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's citation of statutory authority as a basis for claim rejections.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 2, 5-9, 11, 12, 15-19 and 21-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kamai (U.S. Patent No. 5,864,812). The applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

The invention of claim 1 is characterized by limiting processing for prosody control for a selected small speech segment of a plurality of small speech segment extracted from a speech waveform.

By virtue of the above feature, a deterioration in synthesized speech introduced by a waveform editing operation can be effectively prevented. In particular see page 2, line 21 to page 3, line 4.



In the office action, the Examiner states that the prosody control step of claim 1 is disclosed by the reference at FIG. 1, item 1, column 4 lines 5-23 and column 6, lines 56-57. However, Kamai merely teaches controlling the speech segments along the timing expressed by the time information (column 4, lines 20-23).

In Kamai, the interval between speech segments is controlled by the timing expressed by the time information. That is, Kamai limits the manner for changing the interval, but does not inhibit the interval change. To the contrary, the limitation of prosody control according to the claimed invention controls, for example, to inhibit execution of the interval change.

At least for these reasons, applicant submits that the claims are allowable over the cited art.

III. Request for Reconsideration

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims of this application are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejection and allowance is requested. If a conference would assist in placing this application in better condition for allowance, the undersigned would appreciate a telephone call at the number indicated.

March 1, 2004

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Respectfully submitted,
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